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The Road to Troy...

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The Road to Troy...



Sioux Leave For Troy

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA

HOCKEY TEAM

1958-59 NCAA Champions

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Coach Lauds Teamwork, Fans

By BOB MAY

Hockey Coach, University of North Dakota

This is a story that has taken 12 years to write, but now that we have the privilege to put our thoughts down for posterity, we wish to say that we deem it a privilege to have coached a national championship team. It's taken many, many individual efforts and much superlative teamwork to reach the pinnacle. In all sincerity we must add that we hope, and we will do our utmost, to stay on top.

We like to call this "The Road to Troy". It began in 1946-47 when the late Jamie Jamieson coached the first Fighting Sioux hockey team. He was followed by Don Norman (1947-48 and 1948-49), Cliff (Fido) Purpur (1949-50 through 1955-56) and Al Renfrow (1956-57). We took over the reins in 1957. It seems to me the sophomore-laden club of 1957-58, which narrowly missed the NCAA championship, learned its lessons well.

Scores of outstanding players have worn North Dakota's Green and White since Norman's team knocked off national champion Michigan that first season. Without listing them all because of space limitations, we recall some of the Sioux greats who fought many brilliant battles.

Who will ever forget the memorable performances of our first All American, defenseman John Noah; the McKinnons, Buzz and Prince Johnson, Jim Medved, Cal Marvin, unforgettable Joe Silovich and Ginny Christian, all Olympic stars after playing here. Then came that remarkable, canny Ken Johanson. Who will ever forget incomparable Bullet Ben Cherski, who on his way to All American honors, scored more goals in one season than any other Sioux. Certainly one of the greatest not only here but in all college hockey, was Broncho Bill Reichart, twice an All American. Who can forget the play of wing Jim Ridley? And the greatest defenseman of them all, three times an All American—Bill Steenson.

We, the 1958-59 National Intercollegiate Hockey champions, dedicate this booklet to you and our fans. In this 12-year battle we have had unstinted support from our students and faculty. You loyal fans have kept us on the road, no detours allowed. We wish to thank the people of Greater Grand Forks, the Hockey Boosters, the press, radio and television and the State of North Dakota for their undying loyalty.

My assistant coach, Barry Thorndycraft, our team doctor James Leigh, and Al Purpur, rink manager, were most instrumental in our success. The close-knit unity of the players who banded together with superior esprit de corps and dedicated themselves, injured or not, that this would be the year to travel the Road to Troy, or to be concise, to the championship. We believe the test of a true champion is one that can bounce back after defeat and certainly our team proved that time and time again. Regardless of adversity, this team has come through. They are a great and true championship group.

The publication of this booklet is the responsibility of Lee Bohnet, UND Sports Information Director, and I feel certain the contents will prove interesting. I wish to add that proceeds from its sale will be used to purchase NCAA championship rings and our traveling blazers.

I know that next year we shall not rest on past laurels, but strive with greater effort to defend our title. As champions we will not let down and the driving force of you fans will enable us to seek higher goals. Thank you.



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Behind the Scene



Team Doctor James Leigh



Assistant Coach Barry Thorndycraft

Athletic Director Praises Team



Congratulations to the National Championship hockey champions of 1959. Members of the entire athletic and physical education staff are proud of our hockey team. Such an attainment is achieved only through careful planning, cooperation and work of players, coaches, departmental staff and the entire University faculty along with the loyal support of many hockey fans.

Nor are we satisfied with outstanding success in one sport only for a short period of one year. Our aim is excellence in all sports year after year. We are planning carefully and making every possible effort to help each sport reach the pinnacle of success.

L. R. MARTI

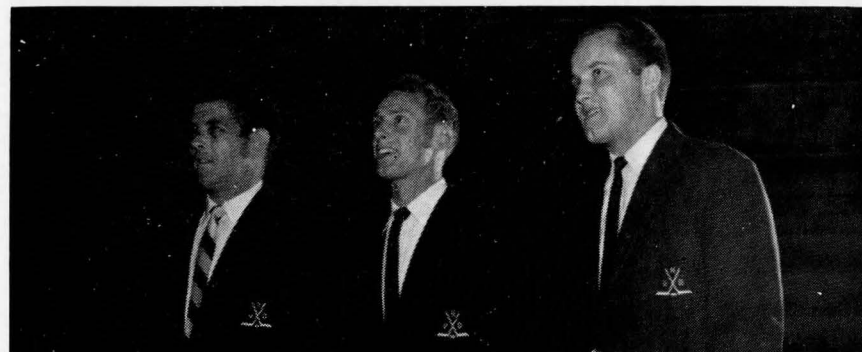
*Acting Director of Athletics
and Physical Education*

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Sioux Leadership . . .



1957-58 Co-Captains Ed Willems (left), Jim Ridley and Coach Bob May led Sioux into NCAA tournament.



1958-59 Leaders, Captain Bill Steenson (left) and Alternate Captains Joe Poole (center) and Julian Brunetta led the Sioux to 1959 NCAA title. All have completed outstanding careers as UND athletes.



1959-60 Captains Ed Thomlinson (left), Guy LaFrance (center) and Art Miller (right) will guide Sioux fortunes in their bid to defend the title.

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It Began at Michigan State

By LEE BOHNET

UND Sports Information Director

We opened the league schedule at Michigan State, where Coach Amo Bessone had 11 seniors and Joe Selinger, a great goalie. The flight to East Lansing was rough, but the 6-0 victory Michigan State posted in the first game was even rougher. All American Bill Steenson was injured. Stunned by the Spartan's victory, the Sioux regrouped and hammered out a 5-4 victory in the second game as Reg Morelli scored the hat trick. While Morelli was great in all the games he played, he seemed to have his best nights against Selinger and the Spartans.

It was mid-February the Spartans came to Grand Forks leading the western race for NCAA berths. The Spartans at the time were considered a shoo-in for one of the



Jerry Walford scores against Spartans assisted by Ron King and Bernie Haley.

berths, with the other being contested by the Sioux, Michigan Tech and Denver. May's Marauders needed a split with Bessone's battlers here and they got it.

The Sioux were injury-riddled for State. Six Sioux stalwarts were down in the doctor's book for care. The first game went to the Spartans, 3-2, but the outcome was in doubt all the way. Before the second game, the Sioux players pledged to win the second contest at their pre-game meal. Injured Sioux players all dressed, and through the brilliant work of Dr. Leigh, played and won the game, 4-2. The game had been the sixth in nine days. Coach Bob May says the physical output by the injured players provided the momentum and courage to carry the team through the six remaining games against Minnesota here the following weekend and four games in five days out west against Denver and Colorado College.

Before the trip to East Lansing the Sioux had defeated the Alumni, 9-1. In late November they had whipped the Winnipeg Maroons by identical 5-3 scores. The Alumni game was an outstanding collection of former Sioux stars and had they had the benefit of better conditioning would have made it tougher. Everyone at UND again wishes to thank the Alums.

It was during the Michigan State series here that three-time All American defenseman Bill Steenson played his final game for the Sioux. Not large in physical stature, Steenson had a fighting heart in the finest tradition of the Fighting Sioux. Everyone will miss Bill's great and courageous play.

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East Grand Forks

Denver's Pioneers Were Tough

Defending NCAA champion Denver University bounced into Grand Forks in mid-December ready to bury the Sioux with a team that had been called 20 per cent stronger than the one that had captured the NCAA title. But the Sioux weren't ready to roll over and play dead for Coach Murray Armstrong's redshirts. In one of the fastest games of the year the Sioux topped the Pioneers, 4-3, on Captain Joe Poole's overtime goal.

Reg Morelli was severely injured in the first game and missed five weeks of action. This, Coach May believes, hurt Sioux chances for victory in subsequent games. Poole, who seemed to feast on Pioneer goal-tending, again scored the winning marker in the second game. The score was 4-3. While the sweep of the defending champs here wasn't quite enough salve for the 6-2 wound suffered in the 1957-58 NCAA title game, it helped a lot and made the Sioux a tough unit.

The last two days of February found the Sioux in Denver battling for a play-off berth. A split against DU and Colorado College were thought necessary to enter the NCAA classic. It may be the Sioux played their finest hockey in Denver in the first game of the series. At any rate the Sioux cracked out a 6-4 triumph in a see-saw battle before a capacity house. Our defense had been weakened by the loss of Steenson and going with Ralph Lyndon, Julian Brunetta and converted center Guy LaFrance as rear-guards and four forward lines we surprised the Pioneers. DU won the second game, 6-2. Some people believe the higher altitude in Denver creates a problem. No one knows, but in the second game 42 minutes in penalties didn't help the Sioux cause.

Michigan Tech proved to be the surprise team of the western circuit. For a major part of the season Coach John McInnes' Huskies were on top of the standings. Tech came here right after New Year and won the opener, 3-2. Hard-working Ron King provided the winning goal in overtime in the 2-1 second game. At Houghton Feb. 6-7 we split. Tech won the opener, 4-3, scoring in the final minute for the victory. After a long team meeting before the second game at Tech, which the Sioux won 4-0 with Goalie Bob Peabody giving a tremendous display of courage to gain his first shutout of the year, we began our drive to the national championship.



Sioux Smash Denver University hopes.

Moment of Triumph for NCAA Champions



1958-59 UND Sioux National Champions: Kneeling, left to right, Les Merrifield, Ron King, Bart Larson, Bob Began, Pete Gazely and Ed Thomlinson. Standing, left to right: Manager Ted Kotyk, Ralph Lyndon, Reg Morelli, Stan Paschke, George Gratton, Jerry Walford, Bernie Haley, Bob May, Art Miller, Joe Poole, Bob Peabody, Guy

LaFrance and Julian Brunetta. Sioux were singing "Auld Lang Syne," immediately after defeating Michigan State, 4-3, in overtime on Center Reg Morelli's terrific goal. Morelli, before goal was scored, had been voted the tournament's Most Valuable Player.

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Riding a two-game winning streak over Duluth Branch in which Pete Gazely played well, we flew to Ann Arbor to face Michigan. Coach May had predicted his team would win a pair from the Wolverines. However, after the split he said he had given up predicting outcomes. The Sioux roared to a 6-1 victory in the opener in which Sophomore Bernie Haley scored two goals. Despite outshooting the Michigan six in the second game the Sioux lost, 4-2, and Coach May says it was the hardest defeat he had to swallow all season. May says the Wolverines will have a powerhouse and looks forward to playing them here March 3-4, 1960.

The North Dakota-Minnesota series is the most exciting in college hockey. Records mean nothing when these teams clash and this year was no exception. The Gopher coach often has been jokingly accused of raising the temperature in his rink, while the Sioux coach, it is said, prays for cold weather when they play here. Minnesota, on its home ice, won the first game 4-3, but the Sioux war-whooped to a 6-2 rout in the second match with Ed Thomlinson starring in Minneapolis. In February when the Gophers came to Grand Forks, May had only two regular defensemen to stop the Gophers, who had had a four-game winning streak and hope for a trip to Troy. With Ralph Lyndon playing 50 brilliant minutes and Art Miller scoring the hat trick, the Sioux won 6-5 and 5-2.

Colorado College, under new coach Tony Frasca, played two fine games in Grand Forks before being subdued, 6-4 and 4-2. Les Merrified got the hat trick in the opener and Stan Paschke broke a scoring slump in the second match. At Colorado Springs to wind up the regular season, the Sioux shot the works in posting a 7-2 triumph which earned them an NCAA tournament berth for the second straight year. In a high-scoring affair CC won the second, 9-5.

Coach May has said George Gratton made a great contribution in converting from forward to splitting the goal-tending with battle-scarred Bob Peabody. Wing Bob Began played every spot except goal and was a popular team player. Sophomores who had come along fast were Bart Larson, Gerry Walford and Garth Perry and helped the cause. So now the Sioux were set for Troy.



All-American Bill Steenson controls a face-off against Colorado College as Guy LaFrance and George Gratton look on.

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Troy ... and Sioux Victory

We have all read about the Spartans in Troy in ancient history, but here we were again locked in terrific struggle with them as the western representatives in the NCAA classic. The Sioux got a break in playing St. Lawrence University in the beautiful RPI arena in the opening game.

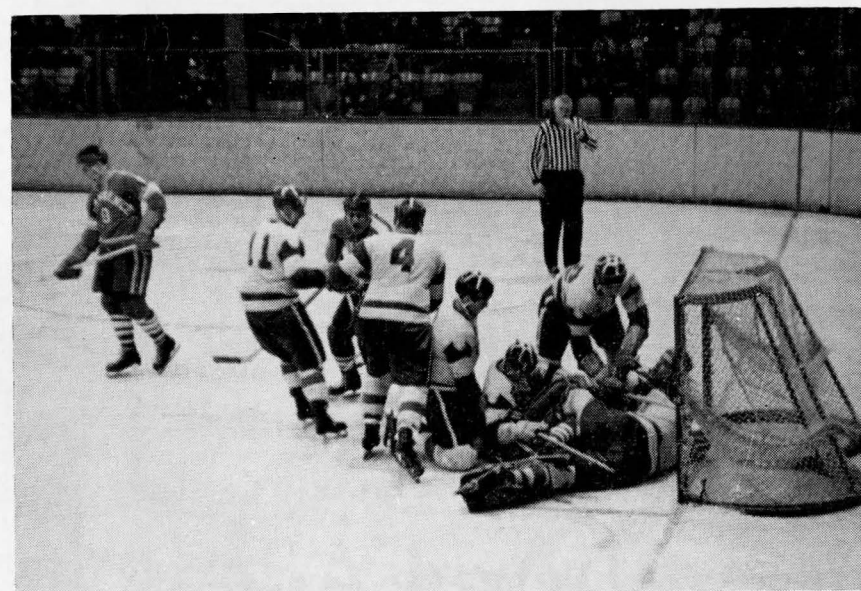
St. Lawrence, the top eastern team, took the Sioux into the first of four tourney overtime games, before Center Guy LaFrance scored the winning goal, which Coach May has described as "one of the most beautiful I have ever seen." In the second game Friday Michigan State edged Boston College, 4-3 in overtime, to gain the final with the Sioux Saturday night. In the consolation game Boston College topped the Larries, 6-5, in three overtimes. Prior to the NCAA title game, the Sioux had won six straight overtime games over the span of two seasons.

Then came 8 P.M. Saturday and the big one. May and Thorndycraft had sent the Sioux through a workout that morning, which May said was against his athletic philosophy but deemed necessary. May and Thorndycraft paced the corridor before the Sioux dressing room and Bessone also did the same.

Both teams played cautious hockey the first period with State leading 1-0 at the intermission. The Sioux tallied three big goals by Lyndon, Jerry Walford and Stan Paschke in the middle period to lead 3-1 after 40 minutes. The Sioux went defensive in the final session and State tied it up with four minutes to go.

Then at 4:22 of the sudden death overtime Reg Morelli banged home Art Miller's rebound to win the championship for the University of North Dakota. It was the greatest thrill for himself and his players, Coach Bob May said later. Morelli, Thomlinson, Lyndon and Poole were selected for the All-Tournament team.

THE FIGHTING SIOUX HAD WON THE ELUSIVE, 12-YEAR BATTLE. IT WAS GLORIOUS!



Sioux used a tight defense against St. Lawrence. Left to right are Joe Poole (11), Ralph Lyndon, Julian Brumetta (kneeling), Ron King (sitting), Les Merrifield (bending) and goalie Bob Peabody on ice.

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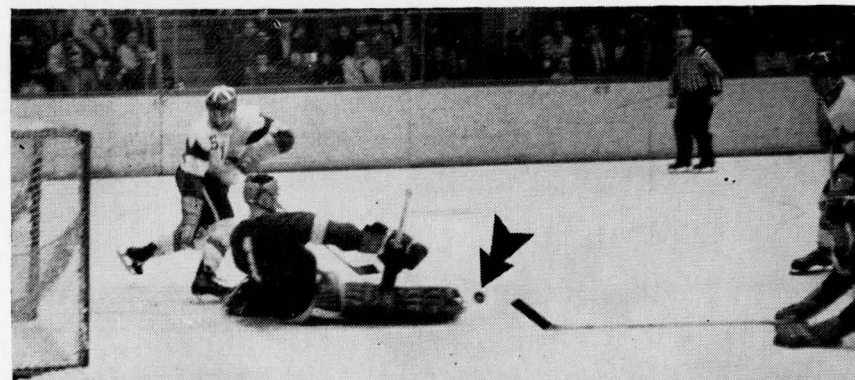
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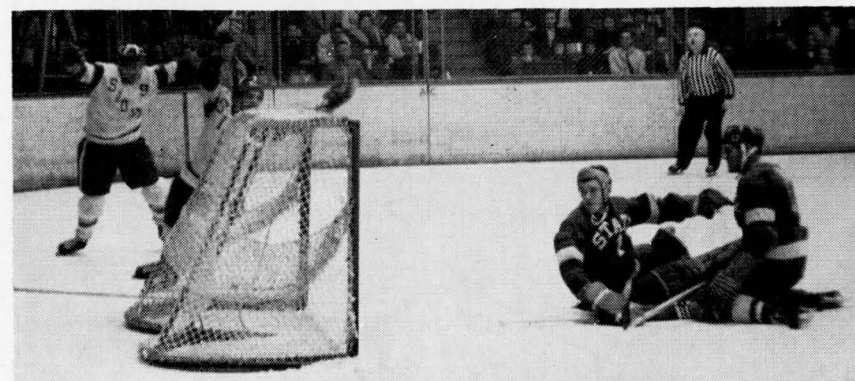
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Troy . . . Morelli Scores Winner



Reg Morelli (right) rebounds Art Miller's close-in blast by outstretched Selinger.



Morelli and Miller raise sticks in victory salute as a surprised Selinger glares at puck in cage.



Guy LaFrance makes flying leap to embrace Morelli (19). Spartan defenseman kneels before Selinger

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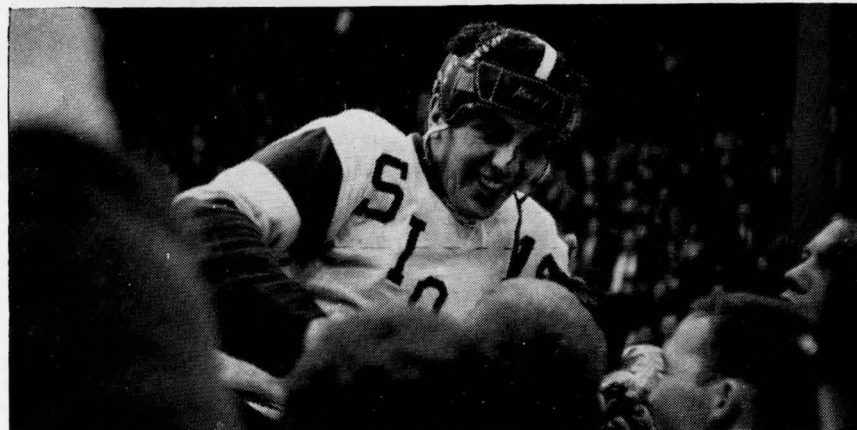
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Sioux players hoist a jubilant Coach Bob May after triumph.



Victorious Sioux lift Reg Morelli to shoulders after his winning overtime goal.

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It Ended Here . . .



Captains Joe Poole (left) and Julian Brunetta (center) present NCAA championship trophy to University President George W. Starcher.

FINAL 1958-59 SIOUX ACCUMULATIVE SEASON STATISTICS

	Games Played	Goals	Assists	Points	Penalty Minutes
Art Miller, W	29	23	18	41	26
Reg Morelli, C	22	15	15	30	12
Ed Thomlinson, W	30	14	12	26	14
Joe Poole, C	30	15	10	25	31
Guy LaFrance, C	30	8	17	25	28
Les Merrifield, W	30	10	13	23	42
Ralph Lyndon, D	30	5	13	18	24
Bill Steenson, D	23	4	12	16	54
Ron King, W	30	7	6	13	20
Stan Paschke, W	30	3	10	13	4
Bernie Haley, W	28	5	5	10	16
Bart Larson, W	30	5	4	9	15
Bob Began, C-D	30	5	2	7	8
Julian Brunetta, D	24	2	4	6	10
Jerry Walford, C	12	2	2	4	11
Garth Perry, W	16	1	1	2	7
Ken Wellen, C	10	1	1	2	6
Pete Gazely, D	10	0	1	1	8
Bob Peabody, G	20	0	0	0	4
George Gratton, G	13	0	0	0	2
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